

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Attached hereto is one (1) replacement drawing sheet that complies with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. The replacement drawing sheet incorporates the following drawing changes:

In Fig. 1, reference numerals 12b and 13b have been added to indicate the diffuser shell peripheral wall 12b and the closure shell peripheral wall 13b.

It is respectfully requested that the replacement drawing sheet be approved and made a part of the record of the above-identified application.

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 7-13 are pending in the application. New claims 11-13 have been added.
Claims 6 has been canceled.

Drawings

Minor changes have been made to Fig. 1 so that it is consistent with the disclosure in the specification.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve and enter these drawing changes.

Specification

The disclosure has been objected to because of some informalities.

The specification has been amended, as suggested by the Examiner, to overcome this objection.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Further, minor changes have been made to the specification to place it in better for U.S. practice.

Substitute Specification

The above-noted specification changes are set forth in the attached Substitute Specification. The Substitute Specification does not contain new matter.

A Comparison Specification showing the matter being added to and deleted from the original specification is also submitted herewith.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve the Substitute Specification.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 5-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, because of some informalities.

Claims 5 and 9 have been amended, as suggested by the Examiner to overcome this rejection.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Further, minor changes have been made to the claims to place them in better form for U.S. practice.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

(a) Claims 1-3, 5, 6, and 8-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakashima et al. (USP 6,364,354). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Nakashima discloses, in Fig. 1, a gas generator having a housing 3, two igniters 12a, 12b, two combustion chambers 5a, 5b, and a partition wall 4 that separates combustion chamber 5a (corresponds the “first combustion chamber” of the claimed invention of the present application) and a combustion chamber 5b (corresponds to the “second combustion chamber”) from each other. The partition wall 4 has a communication hole 10 that allows communication between the first combustion chamber 5a and the second combustion chamber 5b.

As shown in Fig. 1, however, Nakashima does not have a retainer provided inside the second combustion chamber 5b. The Examiner alleges in page 6 of the Office Action that “It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was

made to arrange a sealing tape within the second combustion chamber, since it has been held that rearranging parts of an invention involves only routine skill in the art.”

Even assuming that “arranging a sealing tape within the second combustion chamber” is routine skill in the art, which Applicants do not admit, Applicants respectfully submit that the “retainer” of the claimed invention forms “a gap between the retainer and the communication hole such that the gas generating agents accommodated in the second combustion chamber do not block the communication hole.” A sealing tape does not form such a gap.

Moreover, the retainer of the claimed invention of the present application can prevent gas generating agent (usually in pellet form) from blocking the communication hole. In contrast, the seal tape of Nakahima breaks down to pieces and burns out upon actuation of the inflator. Therefore, the seal tape does not work to prevent the gas generating agent from blocking the communication hole.

In view of this, Applicants respectfully submit that Nakashima does not disclose or suggest the “retainer” as recited in claim 1.

Claim 6 has been canceled.

Claims 2, 3, and 10, variously dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

Claim 5 is allowable at least for the similar reasons as stated in the foregoing with regard to claim 1.

Claims 8 and 10, dependent on claim 5, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 5.

Claim 9 is allowable at least for the similar reasons as stated in the foregoing with regard to claim 1.

Claim 10, dependent on claim 9, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 10.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

(b) Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakashima et al. in view of DiGiacomo (USP 6,447,007). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4, indirectly dependent on claim 1, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

(c) Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakashima et al. in view of Fukuma et al. (USP 3,950,263). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 7, indirectly dependent on claim 5, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

New Claim

Claim 11, dependent on claim 1, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1.

Claim 12, dependent on claim 9, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1.

Claim 13, dependent on claim 1 or 9, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1 or 9.

A favorable determination by the Examiner and allowance of claim 11 is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion


Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections, and allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (#40,417) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: One (1) Replacement Drawing Sheet - Fig. 1
Substitute Specification - 25 pages
Comparison Specification - 25 pages